

Blackheath, 8 July 1871.

My Dear Mrs. Gray,

Your most kind & affectionate
letter would not have been so long -
(much too long) unacknowledged, had it
not reached me at a time of great distress
& trouble - I received it at Winchester,
where I spent nearly two months, with
my dear good old nurse, in constant &
anxious attendance upon our dear Herbie,
who was confined to the College infirmary,
with scarlatina of the most malignant
type! For upwards of 4 weeks he lay, hovering
as it were, between life & death, & for part of
the time insensible & delirious. The physician
and in attendance upon him, gave but fee-
ble hopes of him - even for weeks they hesi-
tated - & my best bulletins, 2 or 3 times a day,
were confined to "not worse" - However, it
has pleased our merciful Father to restore
the dear boy, to a large measure of health,
& he is now again at College, after 4
weeks at the sea-side. He is still deaf
more or less, & I am taught to believe that
this infirmity may last for a long time -

but, I trust there is no organic injury to the ears, tho' during his illness he was entirely deaf, for some time - Just before he quitted the infirmary, the Senior of two (trained) hospital Nurses, in charge of him, said that during her long experience of Scarlet fever, she never knew so bad a Case, to recover - Of 19 that were attacked, poor Herbie was the worst, excepting the Son of the Bp. of Salisbury, (Dr. Moberly) who died on the 14th Day after his seizure! This was, happily, the only fatal Case, at Winchester - which is thought by the Doctors very remarkable, in so large a number of Patients - Dear Herbie is in good spirits, but still feeble, & not allowed to take part in any violent exercise - Cricket &c. The autumn vacation of 7 weeks, commences on 2 August when, I suppose, I shall again take him to the sea-side, where, I trust, by God's blessing, he may be entirely restored - Hearing (I mean perfect & acute) excepted - This protracted, & extreme anxiety was a great strain on my nervous system, from which I am still suffering - & to this, a further grief & trial has been super-added - On the 8th of last October, at Meran, in the Tyrol - my poor John, lost ^{by Typhoid} one of his two daughters, a most promising child, of the age of 10 years - by which unexpected blow, he, & more especially his wife, were completely prostrated, & he, at once, determined

to spend the winter (his last in Europe) in England. I procured for them a very pretty Cottage, at Bonchurch, in the I. of Wight - but John's ~~health~~ ^{illness}, & her physical & mental depression increased rather than otherwise, & two months ago they came up to London - where my soul's health, I trust, rather improved - On the 21 June (my 74th. birth-day!) I had them all farewell, with the assured - moral - certainty that I shall see them no more, in this world! On the 24th they left Spaul. in the "Scotia" - & I see by the telegram, in the paper, that she arrived at New York, on the night of the 4th Inst. - The parting was, necessarily, a very bitter one, under the circumstances - Their eldest girl is 18 1/2 yrs. old - & the two boys of the ages of 14 & 6 respectively - I think you will be pleased with them all if you meet them, which I hope your dear Doctor will do - My dear Annelle, is, & has been quite well - God be praised - & I think improves both physically & mentally - My poor Herbie was first "man", of his year, at College, but, of course, his absence of 3 or 4 months will have thrown him back. Of this - however - I think, comparatively, little - indeed, I laugh - since the dear boy is spared to me almost as one raised from the dead! - I am pained to hear of your poor brother William's bereavement, & beg you to offer him my sincere condolence, in his affliction - It was a great comfort that you arrived at home in time to her - knew 3 weeks - with your suffering sister - The prospect of so good, and efficient a daughter is a great blessing for poor William - & as you remark, the young folks do grow up very fast - it seems odd enough to me to receive a wedding card from another "Pit Jackson"